



FLORIDA WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA)?

The nation's principal, workforce development legislation, the federal Workforce Investment Act of 1998 authorizes funding and establishes a governance process to develop America's workforce in alignment with business needs and economic development priorities. It creates a comprehensive federal, state and local workforce investment system that is business-led at the state and local levels and intended to be customer-focused providing employment and training services and resources to job seekers, workers and businesses.

What is the Florida Workforce Innovation Act and how is it related to WIA?

Florida is recognized as a leader in workforce development in part because of its innovative, market-focused implementation of the federal Workforce Investment Act. In 2000, the state enacted the Florida Workforce Innovation Act, which established the current state workforce system, further defining roles and responsibilities among workforce boards to create a nimble, responsive and market-driven system to address state and local workforce demands, economic shifts and strategic priorities.

What is the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and how is it related WIA?

The bipartisan, bicameral Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) was signed into law by President Barack Obama on July 22, 2014. Its purpose is to reauthorize the Workforce Investment Act. WIOA is designed to help job seekers access employment, education, training, and support services to succeed in the labor market and to match employers with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy. It is the first legislative reform in 15 years of the public workforce system and supports the nation's primary programs and investments in employment services, workforce development, adult education and vocational rehabilitation activities. WIOA implementation is underway. The new law takes effect on July 1, 2015.

What is Florida's workforce system and how is it funded?

Florida's workforce system is known as the CareerSource Florida network. The network consists of: CareerSource Florida, the statewide workforce policy and investment board, 24 regional workforce boards and the nearly 100 career centers they direct to provide local services to job seekers, workers and businesses, along with the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, the state's administrative and fiscal agency for workforce programs. Providing leadership and talent development investments for youth and adults, the CareerSource Florida network is a key component of Florida's Talent Supply System, which encompasses public and private education and training through a continuum from pre-kindergarten, primary/secondary and post-secondary to workforce development/lifelong learning.

The CareerSource Florida network is primarily federally funded. The Workforce Investment Act accounts for the largest portion of funds for workforce investment by state and local workforce boards to address statewide and local workforce needs. Funds are largely distributed via federal and state formulas with required performance

measures set by the U.S. Department of Labor, CareerSource Florida and each of Florida's 24 regional workforce boards. CareerSource Florida sets additional performance goals aligned with key statewide priorities that regional workforce boards may voluntarily achieve to qualify for incentives that result in additional funding for local programs. Other federal funding streams that support Florida's workforce investment include: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Wagner-Peyser, Jobs for Veterans, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and Reemployment Assistance Programs.

How does the CareerSource Florida network measure outcomes resulting from its workforce investment?

Performance accountability is essential to Florida's workforce investment. The CareerSource Florida network measures program effectiveness by evaluating and reporting on federal, state and local performance metrics including, but not limited to, daily and monthly job placements, the number of people who complete training with assistance from the CareerSource Florida network and find jobs, the earnings of those assisted and whether they continue to be employed six months, one year or even longer following their training, and employer engagement. Our network contributes to, and uses in its own program evaluations, data from the nationally recognized Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program (FETPIP), which tracks employment, wages and other information for people who complete a public education or training program anywhere in the state.

As an example of the outcomes measured via data collected for job seekers assisted through the Workforce Investment Act in Florida, consider: Last year, 16,311 people completed a WIA-funded training program and were employed within the first quarter. Of those individuals, 15,024 were still employed six months later, representing an employment retention rate of 92 percent. These individuals earned an average salary of \$37,134 per year.

Programmatic and financial monitoring, directed by the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, is conducted to ensure public funds are invested and programs are managed in compliance with federal and state laws and rules. Each of Florida's 24 regional workforce boards establish local performance goals as well. Florida's state *and* local performance management assists in the identification, and when appropriate discontinuance, of ineffective programs.

What kind of training is available through the Workforce Investment Act?

Training services funded through the Workforce Investment Act may include: occupational skills training, including training for nontraditional employment; on-the-job training; programs that combine workplace training with related instruction, which may include cooperative education programs (including apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship); training programs operated by the private sector; skill upgrading and retraining; entrepreneurial training; job readiness training; adult education and literacy activities and customized training conducted with a commitment by an employer or group of employers to employ an individual upon successful completion of the training. The primary method for facilitating occupational training for job seekers who want to improve their skills and knowledge to secure employment is through Individual Training Accounts (ITA's), which are sometimes referred to as training scholarships, vouchers or stipends. The goal of an ITA is to provide customer choice and support training that leads to an in-demand job.

Under Chapter 445, F.S., Florida regional workforce boards are required to direct at least 50 percent of their WIA funds for adult and dislocated workers to ITA's, unless they seek and are granted a waiver by CareerSource Florida. Job seekers who qualify for and receive an ITA scholarship select their area of training and the training provider from an Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). The scholarship amount is set locally and is paid directly

to the approved training provider, public or private, based on a locally negotiated rate. WIA requires that training participants choose their programs and training providers. To assist with this decision, training participants are provided consumer information from CareerSource Florida network career counselors regarding labor market information and training program/provider performance including post-training job placement proficiency.

Training programs must meet benchmarks related to completion, placement and retention of students, which allows regional workforce boards to discontinue the availability of scholarships for participants to attend poor performing programs and/or institutions. Some examples:

- CareerSource South Florida requires training providers annually to meet at least two of the following three criteria in order for their programs and institutions to remain on its list of eligible training providers:
 - 70-percent completion rate for all ITA-sponsored trainees
 - 70-percent placement rate (This requirement must be one of the two achieved.)
 - 70-percent placement within the training-related field of study
- CareerSource Broward also has a 70-percent minimum placement rate for its training providers in order for their programs to remain eligible for ITA scholarships.
- CareerSource Central Florida's ITA policy includes a provision that removes any training program that falls below a 60-percent placement rate, according to data by the Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program (FETPIP), from its approved list of programs eligible for ITA-supported tuition.

How are training providers selected?

For each of Florida's 24 regional workforce boards, there is an Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) designed to assist individuals receiving Workforce Investment Act services in finding approved training providers for in-demand regional and statewide occupations. Eligible programs must provide training for a targeted occupation, which is determined based on regional and statewide demand or emerging workforce needs that best position the trainee to obtain employment following training. Public and private training providers are included on the ETPL. Private providers must be licensed by Florida's Commission for Independent Education. ITA scholarship recipients select their training program and provider based on the approved ETPL in the region where they will receive training.

I'm a job seeker. Where do I go to determine if I am eligible for an Individual Training Account (ITA) scholarship?

Many job-assistance services, such as help with your resume and interviewing skills, are offered universally and at no charge to the job seeker. A career center, within the CareerSource Florida network, can provide you with information regarding the full menu of career development programs and resources, including Workforce Investment Act-funded Individual Training Account scholarships, available in your community and eligibility requirements, if applicable. To find a career center nearest you, visit careersourceflorida.com. Florida career centers are proud partners of the American Job Center network.

Where can I go for assistance with my Florida job search?

If you are searching for a job in Florida, you'll want to make sure you post your resume and create an online profile on the Employ Florida Marketplace, a powerful online job-search site at employflorida.com that is used by CareerSource Florida network professionals and Florida employers to identify qualified candidates for job

openings. Employment assistance is available for job seekers ranging from entry level to professional. To visit the career center nearest you for assistance from career development professionals in your community, visit careersourceflorida.com. Priority services are available locally to assist veterans. Specialized services and programs also are available locally to help families with limited incomes including youth, people with disabilities and individuals seeking to move from public assistance to self-sufficiency.

I'm a business in Florida. Where do I go to learn more about training assistance such as on-the-job training and incumbent worker training for new hires or existing employees as well as other resources to help me recruit and hire job candidates?

CareerSource Florida is a powerful, statewide network of workforce professionals who help employers of all sizes recruit, hire and train workers to keep the best and brightest employees. Find and contact the CareerSource Florida network regional organization in your community for assistance with training grants and other services such as recruitment events and candidate screenings and assessments by visiting careersourceflorida.com.